

they cannot come to us. These gates have in a certain sense been opened to us, in the way of being opened to let through our beloved fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children and friends; they have been called away from us, we watched over them when life was flickering, the last breath came, the struggle over, the gates were silently drawn back, they escaped, again the gates were closed. Is the way we seem to have been brought near to them ourselves; we are compelled to feel how close the living are to the regions of the dead. Just one step between us and death.

These gates have in a certain sense been opened to us when by affliction we have been brought near them. Do we remember when we were lain upon the bed of affliction, when life's work seemed as if finished—earthly ties seemed dissolving, the mind being made up for the last stage of the journey; the physician says nothing more can I do, and God in his goodness and mercy restored us, and again gave us a supply of years of probationary being. Can we not look up and say, 'Glory be to God!'

Take the prospect glass of divine truth and place the eye of faith to it, and thus look through. Beyond are two distinct worlds: The one beneath is an abyss of darkness, a pit of despair, a fiery lake, it is hell—the house of the wicked, for 'the wicked shall be turned into hell.' All unbelievers, idolaters, infidels, blasphemers, drunkards, haters of God's word, and rejecters of Christ are there.

Then, above, praise God, beyond the gates of death; there is a world of light, and peace, and glory, it is heaven. There is the radiant throne of God, the effulgent lustre of which is so overwhelming that the seraphim and cherubim cover their faces before it. There are the angels and archangels. Yes, glory be to God, there are our friends who have died in the triumph of a living faith! They are mingling with the blood washed throng around the great white throne.

Such are the worlds beyond the gates of death, paradise and perdition. The abode of the glorified and happy, and the prison of the condemned and lost. To one of these worlds we are all hastening. Christ our blessed Saviour, constantly kept these worlds before those whom he addressed. He describes in the most graphic manner, the last separation between the righteous and wicked. When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand 'come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Then shall he say also to them on the left, 'depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' And these shall go into everlasting punishment but the righteous into life eternal."

The Gospel provides a safe passport through the gates of death. This passport is acceptance with God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. By this we pass from death unto life, and the spirit of God is given us, as the earnest of eternal glory. The possession of this spirit delivers us from fear and torment now, it saves from despair in the dying hour, and it insures our everlasting salvation from hell. These gates of death shall thus become the gates of paradise. To die will be great gain. Such die in triumph, exclaiming 'O death, where is thy sting?' 'O grave, where is thy victory?'

Are we preparing to pass through these gates? Can we say as one of old, 'for I am now ready?' We cannot tell how soon we are compelled to realize the meaning of the text. The love of life is natural, but true religion sanctifies this feeling and raises the mind to that which is beyond even the higher life. The Christian need not repine, or feel cast down because there are gates which lets them out of this world of suffering and sin into a world of endless praise. May God help us all to live to honor and glorify his blessed name while we live here in this world of affliction, pain and sorrow, so that when we come down to the Jordan of death, we can pass through these gates with pleasure and

that we may be so unspeakably happy as to see the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem swing back upon their golden hinges and waft our souls into the city of celestial abode, where we can live with God our blessed Saviour forever.

An Exposition of the Phrophecies.

BY J. B. LAIR.

Chapter xiv.—THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

The idea has obtained, in the world, that Christ will not come in person again, but His word will finally so revolutionize the world, and so thoroughly subdue it, and bring it into such complete subjection to God's will, that it will be said "that all shall know the Lord from the least even unto the greatest;" and then of course it could be said that the Lord is reigning over the earth. Indeed the idea seems very prevalent that the Christians are doing the work of subduing the world for Christ. I fear, that to all such, Christ "will come as a thief in the night."

In reviewing the subject, we will notice:

- 1st. Christ's coming.
- 2nd. The manner of His coming.
- 3rd. The purpose of His coming.

1st. Christ's coming. At the time He ascended to heaven, it was told to the Galileans that "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1: 11. Paul says to the 1-Thess. 5: 2, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night;" for when they say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them. * * * But ye brethren are not in darkness that the day should overtake you as a thief." 3: 4 verses: Rev. 16: 15, "Behold I come as a thief."

These are enough to show that Christ's second coming will be sudden and unexpected, hence a conflict with the general idea that the Gospel in the hands of Christians shall wear out sin by degrees, and gradually introduce the reign of Christ in the world. Daniel in his vision more than five centuries before Christ came the first time, looked down the ages and "saw one like the Son of man come with the clouds of heaven" 7: 13; to receive a kingdom, and dominion on this earth, and Christ's own testimony to the high priest, will admit of no doubt that it is another personal coming, Christ says "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Matt. 26: 64; see John 1: 51, and 1 Thess. 4: 16. These Scriptures will certainly settle the matter of Christ's Personal second coming in the mind of every believer in the Bible.

2nd. The manner of his coming. The testimony is that He "shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Paul says "he shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel;" and another testimony is, that "every eye shall see him." Those present saw Christ ascending; He will be seen descending—he will come in a visible manner, in excellent glory and great power, attended by a retinue of angels, in splendor becoming His position as King of the world. The "all power" that was given Christ after the resurrection will be exercised fully at his second coming. There is no doubt but Christ received "all power before he ascended to heaven, and he exercised enough for the salvation of man; but it is true that he never has fully exercised the "all power" yet, He has not since his resurrection exercised the sin-forgiving power, because he is "our mediator," and he is not mediator with himself, but with God: hence it is plain that he does not exercise that power, but when he comes again, he will come in GREAT POWER, as judge of the earth and King of the world, for "To that end was I born."

(To be continued)

Immodest Religion.

Some people carry their want of modesty even into the services of the church, and constitute that class of modern Pharisees, who do so much harm to the Christian cause. They and they alone are the truly sanctified; when they pray it is for others and not for themselves; they hardly feel their own need of grace, but they are mournfully sensible of

the want of it in all others. Such men repel from the church, and do not attract to it. They have no comfort for the poor and heavy laden, and they would put Christ in their own shadow, and ask men to accept them as the grandest production of Christianity. If such men exhort, it is always to warn others and not to tell of how their weaknesses have been helped by heaven. One of these men can change the whole spirit of a prayer-meeting and spoil its work and progress, for the people feel that if this is the best the church can do this arrogant, boasting, braggart, exhorter being its noblest product, it can have no message for them. How different is the work of the modest Christian! when he prays he does not forget to ask for the Spirit of prayer and to tell of his own unworthiness before God; when he exhorts he points his moral from his own experience, and leads men Christward. He speaks as one weak brother to another; as one who has walked with trembling, and leaned heavily on the arm of Divine strength, and when he ceases he has borne a blessing with his words.

J. H. KOLP.

Thought.

BY A. M. RIDENOUR.

The mind of man is like a moving picture, supplied with objects, not only from contemplation of things present, but from the fruitful sources of recollection and anticipation.

Memory retraces past events, and restores an ideal reality to scenes which are gone by forever. They live again in revived imagery, and we seem to hear and see with renewed emotions what we heard and saw at a former period.

Successions of such recollected circumstances often form a series of welcome memorials. In religious meditation, the memory becomes a sanctified instrument of spiritual improvement. Another part of this animated picture is furnished by the pencil of Hope; she draws encouraging prospects for the soul, by connecting the past and present with the future. Seeing the promises afar off, he is persuaded of their truth, and embraces them as her own.

The Spirit of God gives a blessing to both these acts of mind, and employs them in the service of religion. Every faculty of body and soul, when considered as a part of "the purchased possession" of the Saviour, assumes a new character. How powerfully does the Apostle, on this ground, urge a plea for holy activity and watchfulness. "What! know ye not that your own body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's."

The Christian may derive much profit and enjoyment from the use of memory, as it concerns those transactions in which he once bore a part. In his endeavors to recall past conversation and intercourse with deceased friends, in particular the powers of remembrance are greatly improved by exercise. One revived idea produces another, till the mind is most agreeably and usefully occupied with lively and holy imaginations.

"Lull'd in the countless chambers of the brain,
Our thoughts are link'd by many a hidden chain;
Awake but one, and lo, what myriads rise!
Each stamps its image as the other flies.
Each as the varied avenues of sense,
Delight or sorrow to the soul dispense,
Brightens or fades; yet with all, with sacred art,
Control the latent fibres of the heart."

Bryan, Ohio.

Up, and Be Doing.

'Up and be doing,' is the word that comes from God to each of us. Leave some good work behind you that shall not be wholly lost when you have passed away. Do something to show that you have a mind and a heart, and a soul within you. . . . Is there no want, no suffering, no sorrow, that you can relieve? Is there no act of tardy justice, no deed of cheerful kindness, no long-forgotten duty that you can perform? Is there no of reconciliation of some ancient quarrel, no payment of some long outstanding debt, no courtesy, or love, or honor to those to whom it has long been due? . . . If there be any such, I beseech you, in God's name, go and do it.—DEAN STANLEY.